1999-2000 AASU Athletics Year in Review

Armstrong State University

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Pirates Capture PBAC Titles In Tennis and Softball
Four AASU Athletes Named PBAC Player of the Year
Seven AASU Athletes Earn All-America Honors
Pirates Finish Third In Commissioner’s Cup Race

Volleyball

Under first-year head coach Alan Segal, the AASU volleyball squad began the season with 29 straight victories, instantly placing the Pirate program on the collegiate volleyball map. AASU finished the season with a 36-5 overall mark, tying the NCAA Division II record for the best single-season turnaround. AASU improved 23.5 games over last season’s 8-24 mark, tying them with Presbyterian, who also improved by 23.5 games in 1987. The Pirates finished tied for second in the PBAC regular season and advanced to the PBAC Tournament Championship game, where they fell to North Florida. AASU finished the year ranked No. 6 in the South Region, narrowly missing an invitation to the NCAA Championships.

Kris Bringewatt was named the PBAC’s Player of the Year, while Lindsay Ehlers earned PBAC Freshman of the Year honors and Segal earned PBAC Coach of the Year honors. Colleen Fitzsimmons and Micah Roman were also named to the All-PBAC squad and several of the Pirate players earned All-Tournament honors throughout the season.
1999–2000 AASU Athletics Year In Review

Men’s Cross Country

ASUS’s men’s cross country squad turned in a successful 1999 campaign, capturing two event titles - the Georgia Southern Opener and the Winthrop Invitational - and finishing fourth at the Peach Belt Athletic Conference Championships and ninth at the NCAA Division II Southeast Regional.

Senior Gary Ginn capped off a fine Pirate career by earning All-PBAC honors for the third consecutive year. Ginn finished 16th at the PBAC Championships and turned in four other Top 10 finishes during the season, including a third-place finish at the Winthrop Invitational.

No runner in the Peach Belt, or the Southeast Region, enjoyed a better debut than freshman Paul McRae. The New Zealander won his first three collegiate races and captured four individual titles during the season, including setting a course record at the Pre-PBAC Championships in Lumberton, N.C. McRae earned All-PBAC honors with a sixth-place finish at the PBAC Championships and also earned All-Region honors with a 13th-place finish at the NCAA Division II Southeast Regional. McRae was also honored by the conference as the Peach Belt’s Freshman of the Year.

The season began on a high note as the Pirates took the Georgia Southern Opener on Sept. 3, defeating PBAC rivals North Florida and Clayton College & State. AASU would finish third at the Pre-PBAC Championships in Lumberton, N.C., then capture its second title of the season at the Winthrop Invitational. The Pirates would then turn in a sixth-place finish at the USC Spartanburg Invitational and a seventh-place finish at the prestigious Disney Cross Country Classic before tuning up for the postseason with a second-place finish at the Georgia Southern Invitational.

At the PBAC Championships, McRae, Ginn and Crenshaw would lead the Pirates to a fourth-place finish, each finishing in the top 20. AASU accumulated 116 points, finishing behind team champion Kennesaw State, Columbus State and North Florida. The Pirates then wrapped up the season with a ninth-place finish at the NCAA Division II Southeast Regional, finishing the meet with 258 points. AASU finished the 1999 season ranked seventh in the Southeast Region, according to the NCAA Division II Coaches’ Poll.

Women’s Cross Country

The AASU women’s cross country squad enjoyed a fine 1999 season, capturing two event titles and achieving a national ranking in the NCAA Division II Top 25 for the first time in school history, helped by the addition of assistant cross country coach Bridget Cobb, who joined the Pirate coaching staff this season after a four-year stint at Northweasern State (La.) and a stellar collegiate career at Texas A&M Commerce. AASU capped off the season with a strong third-place finish at the PBAC Championships and a sixth-place finish at the NCAA Division II Southeast Regional.

A big part of the success of the women’s team starts up front with junior Nikki Garland. A two-time All-PBAC and All-Region runner, Garland added each of those honors again in 1999 with a runner-up finish at the PBAC Championships and a fifth-place finish at the Southeast Regional. Garland enjoyed a stellar regular season, winning individual titles in four of six events, including setting a course record in Lumberton, N.C., at the Pre-PBAC meet.

Sophomore Melanie Clarke followed up her outstanding freshman year with a solid second year on the courses, earning All-PBAC honors for the second year in a row and also adding All-Region honors for the first time with a sixth-place finish at the Southeast Regional. Clarke also notched three third-place overall finishes this season.

Bursting onto the scene for the Lady Pirate runners, freshman Jillian Charles enjoyed a standout freshman season by capturing the Atlantic College Athletic Conference Freshman of the Year honors for her 10th-place finish at the conference championships.

The 1999 season began with a fourth-place finish at the Georgia Southern Opener, but the following week, the Lady Pirates captured the Pre-PBAC Championship title in Lumberton, N.C. Second place finishes at the Winthrop Invitational and USC Spartanburg Invitational followed, then the Lady Pirates finished seventh in the prestigious Disney Cross Country Classic in Orlando, Fla. AASU’s first national ranking of the season came at the Disney Classic and the win would push AASU to 25th in the NCAA Division II Coaches’ Top 25 poll, the first-ever national ranking for the Lady Pirates.

At the PBAC Championships, Garland, Clarke and Charles all finished in the Top 10 as the Lady Pirates accumulated 81 points, good for third place. Garland and Clarke continued their strong running in the NCAA Division II Southeast Regional, finishing fifth and sixth, respectively.
The AASU men’s basketball team completed a successful season with a torrid run through the PBAC Tournament, culminating in their second berth in the championship game in the past three seasons. Even though the Pirates fell to Columbus State in the championship game and missed out on a berth to the NCAA Championships, the season showed the university and the Savannah community a taste of what the future holds for AASU men’s basketball.

Struggling along at 4-9, head coach Griff Mills installed a starting lineup of seniors Robert Campbell, Tavares Brown, Greg Favors and Cyrille Mainnemarre and sophomore David Koncul against preseason PBAC favorite Lander on January 8. The Pirates shocked the Senators, 76-65, on that Saturday evening and proceeded to roll off 10 wins in their next 13 games to clinch second place in the PBAC with an 11-5 mark in the conference. Overall, AASU finished with a 16-13 record.

Sparking the successful play was the move of Campbell, a Hinesville native, to point guard. Campbell finished the season leading the Pirates in scoring, averaging 15.0 points per game, and leading the PBAC in assists and steals. For the second straight year, Campbell ranked nationally in steals and earned several honors, including becoming the Pirates’ first-ever PBAC Player of the Year.

Overall, the Pirates finished the season shooting 49.6 percent from the field, good enough for eighth in NCAA Division II. In 2000-2001, the Pirates will compete in the prestigious Disney Tip-Off Classic with a team that loses only one player from the 1999-2000 squad.

The future is bright for the Pirate basketball program!
Sporting a roster of no seniors, one junior, four sophomores and five freshman, the AASU women’s basketball team struggled to a 7-19 overall record and a 4-12 mark in the PBAC.

The Lady Pirates had their share of big wins on the season, however. AASU defeated Valdosta State, 58-56, on Nov. 23, the first win ever for the Lady Pirates over the Lady Blazers.

Sophomore guard Lexie Martin hit a jump shot in the closing seconds to give the Lady Pirates a 77-75 win over Columbus State on Feb. 5 - snapping a six-game losing streak to the Cougars. The loss would be the last for a Cougar squad that advanced to the NCAA Division II Elite Eight.

AASU also received some momentum heading into the 2000-2001 season with a season-ending 74-65 win over Clayton College & State on Feb. 26, giving the young Lady Pirates some confidence for the offseason and for next year.

Freshman Duanda Ball made an immediate impact for the Lady Pirates, leading the team in scoring, averaging 13.4 points per game, and shooting 56 of 146 three-pointers (38.4 percent). Sophomore Lexie Martin averaged 11.0 points per game and led the Lady Pirates in assists with 78.

The 1999-2000 season also marked the last for head coach Lynn Jarrett, as she announced her resignation following the year. Jarrett compiled a 46-63 record in four seasons at AASU.

At the helm of the Lady Pirate basketball program in 2000-2001 will be Roger Hodge, who helped lead Liberty University to three Big South Conference Championships and three NCAA Women’s Tournament appearances. Hodge was introduced as the Lady Pirates’ new coach at a press conference on May 22 in Alumni Arena.
Head coach Joe Roberts’ baseball squad finished the 2000 season with a 37-17 overall record, 15-15 in the PBAC and ranked No. 25 in the final Collegiate Baseball Division II Top 25 Coaches’ Poll. The record marked the 17th time the Pirates have won 35 or more games in a season in the last 20 years. AASU has also been ranked in the final NCAA Division II Top 25 in 10 of the last 13 seasons.

AASU compiled a 28-9 home record and went 14-1 in the Savannah Invitational, where the Pirates hosted top-quality Division II teams from across the nation in a three-week long tournament at Pirate Field.

The Pirates again finished in the Top 20 in the nation in pitching (3.85 ERA) and fielding (.960) and had a 10-game winner in junior Jason Ackley, just the 15th Pirate to reach double digits in wins in one season.

Several Pirates finished their careers with stellar years. Catcher Kevin Bullard led the Pirates in home runs (8) and ranked second in RBI (47) and finished his four-year Pirate career in the top 10 of seven different AASU offensive categories. He was also named PBAC Player of the Week for May 2. Pitcher Joey Williams went 8-5 with a 3.30 ERA and his 23 career wins ranks fourth all-time and his 219 strikeouts ranks second all-time. He was also the PBAC’s Pitcher of the Week for February 15.

Shane Shelton finished his AASU career by pitching in 64 games, the second most all-time. Brian Chester, who played three years for the Pirates, ranks ninth in total at-bats. Three two-year players finished their careers - Ray Castillo (AASU’s all-time leader in hit by pitch, 32), Jimmy LaRose (.345 career BA) and Mike Cadwallader (.280 average, 23 stolen bases).

During the season, coach Roberts recorded his 850th career win with a 13-2 victory over Queens on March 4. Roberts ranks seventh all-time in NCAA Division II in coaching victories.

**Individual Statistical Leaders**

- **Runs Batted In**
  - Kevin Bullard, 47, 1.00 rbi/gm (6th PBAC)
  - Joey Williams, 8-5 (T6th PBAC)

- **Home Runs**
  - Kevin Bullard, 8, 0.17 hr/gm (9th PBAC)
  - Joey Williams, 8-5 (T6th PBAC)

- **Doubles**
  - Kevin Bullard, 17, 0.36 dbl/gm (4th PBAC)
  - Haydn Chinn, 17, 0.32 dbl/gm (8th PBAC)

- **Triples**
  - Haydn Chinn, 5, 0.09 tpl/gm (1st PBAC)
  - Bryan Beckmann, 4, 0.08 tpl/gm (2nd PBAC)

- **Stolen Bases**
  - Bryan Beckmann, 25-27, 0.49 sb/gm (3rd PBAC)
  - Jimmy LaRose, 21-27, 0.39 sb/gm (6th PBAC)
  - Brian Chester, 13-15, 0.31 sb/gm (8th PBAC)

- **Wins**
  - Jason Ackley, 10-2 (T2nd PBAC)
  - Joey Williams, 8-5 (T6th PBAC)

- **Saves**
  - Shane Shelton, 3, (T9th PBAC)

- **ERA**
  - B.J. Brinkmeier, 3.25 (5th PBAC)
  - Joey Williams, 3.30 (6th PBAC)

**PBAC Player of the Week**

- Kevin Bullard (May 2, 2000)

**PBAC Pitcher of the Week**

- Joey Williams (Feb. 15, 2000)

**Final NCAA DII National Rank**

No. 25

**Team Statistical Rankings**

- **Batting Average**
  - .307 (3rd PBAC)

- **ERA**
  - 3.85 (3rd PBAC, 17th NCAA)

- **Fielding**
  - .960 (1st PBAC, 19th NCAA)

- **Scoring**
  - 7.43 runs/gm (4th PBAC)

- **Home Runs**
  - 39, 0.72 hr/gm (5th PBAC)

- **Stolen Bases**
  - 110-138, 2.04 sb/gm (2nd PBAC, 25th NCAA)

- **Doubles**
  - 115, 2.13 dbl/gm (t30th NCAA)

- **Double Plays**
  - 48, 0.89 dblplay/gm (28th NCAA)

- **Winning Percentage**
  - 37-17, .685 (31st NCAA)

**Team Statistical Rankings**

- **Batting Average**
  - .307 (3rd PBAC)

- **ERA**
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- **Fielding**
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- **Double Plays**
  - 48, 0.89 dblplay/gm (28th NCAA)

- **Winning Percentage**
  - 37-17, .685 (31st NCAA)
**1999–2000 AASU Athletics Year In Review**

**Softball**

Head coach Marty McDaniel’s AASU softball squad completed a remarkable season of firsts in just the Pirates’ third year of competition. McDaniel led the Pirates to a 51-7 record, a No. 1 ranking during the year in the NFCA Top 25 and a first-ever NCAA Regional berth.

One of the biggest reasons for the Pirates’ success in 2000 was the play of sophomore Annie Sells. Sells was named the Peach Belt Athletic Conference’s Player of the Year and earned second-team All-America honors by the NFCA, the first All-America honors ever for a Pirate softball player. Sells went 23-3 with an 0.75 ERA in the circle and also hit .364 with 13 home runs and 44 RBI.

The Pirates began the season by winning their first 21 games and followed up its early success with doubleheader sweeps of Top 5 teams Kennesaw State and North Florida to take the driver’s seat in the conference race. Two more wins over KSU in the Peach Belt Blast tournament on April 22-23 propelled the Pirates to the top spot in the NFCA Division II Top 25 poll on April 26.

The Pirates’ 1-0 win over Columbus State in their final doubleheader of the season clinched a share of the PBAC Softball championship for the Pirates, the first-ever for AASU, and McDaniel was honored as the PBAC Coach of the Year. Three other players - juniors Tesh Wiewel, Crystal McCracken and Crystal Saccomanno - joined Annie Sells as All-PBAC honorees.

The PBAC championship and No. 1 national ranking assured the Pirates of their first-ever NCAA Tournament appearance as AASU traveled to Kennesaw State for the South Atlantic Regional. AASU went 2-2 in the region tournament, losing to Kennesaw State in the final. Wiewel and McCracken added All-Region and All-Region Tournament honors to their mantles along with Sells. Two other players - sophomore Brea Smith and junior Maria Lopez - also earned All-Region honors.

**AASU PBAC All–Conference Honors**
- Annie Sells (Player of the Year)
- Crystal McCracken
- Tesh Wiewel
- Crystal Saccomanno
- Marty McDaniel (Coach of the Year)

**NFCA Division II All–America Honors**
- Annie Sells (Second Team)

**NFCA All–South Atlantic Region Honors**
- Annie Sells (First Team)
- Maria Lopez (First Team)
- Crystal McCracken (First Team)
- Tesh Wiewel (First Team)
- Brea Smith (Second Team)
- Crystal Saccomanno (Second Team)
- Marty McDaniel (Coach of the Year)

**GTE Academic All–District III Honors**
- Julie King (Second Team)

**South Atlantic Regional All–Tmt Team**
- Annie Sells
- Crystal McCracken
- Tesh Wiewel

**Team Statistical Rankings**

**Batting Average**
- .336 (1st PBAC, 8th NCAA)

**ERA**
- 0.94 (2nd PBAC, 4th NCAA)

**Fielding**
- .975 (1st PBAC, 5th NCAA)

**Scoring**
- 6.28 runs/gm (1st PBAC, 11th NCAA)

**Home Runs**
- 44, 0.76 hr/gm (1st PBAC, 6th NCAA)

**Stolen Bases**
- 31, 0.53 sb/gm (9th PBAC)

**Slugging Percentage**
- .486 (10th NCAA)

**Doubles**
- 83, 1.43 dbl/gm (22nd NCAA)

**Won-Lost Percentage**
- 51-7, .879 (2nd NCAA)
The AASU men’s tennis team enjoyed another stellar year on the courts in 2000, finishing the regular season undefeated in PBAC play and advancing to the NCAA Quarterfinals in Pensacola, Fla.

The AASU men, playing a schedule featuring matches against 15 of the top 25 teams in the nation, knocked off No. 1-ranked Lander University during the season en route to a perfect 11-0 mark in PBAC play. The Pirates ended the year with a 20-7 mark and a No. 6 national ranking, finishing runner-up to Lander in the PBAC Tournament, then lost to Lander in the NCAA Quarterfinals as Lander went on to its eighth straight NCAA Division II title. Of AASU’s 27 matches, 19 were against Top 25 competition and the Pirates compiled a 14-5 mark against those top teams.

Juniors Stefan Wirtz and Christopher Petersen and sophomore Blaise Tribolet earned All-PBAC honors and Petersen was named the ITA South Region Player to Watch. Wirtz and Petersen added ITA Division II All-America honors in singles as well.
The AASU women’s tennis team enjoyed yet another spectacular season in 2000, advancing to the NCAA Quarterfinals and finishing the year with a No. 5 national ranking and a 17-7 record.

The Lady Pirates breezed through the PBAC schedule, finishing 8-0 in the regular season and advancing to the PBAC tournament final, where North Florida took advantage of a short-handed Pirates squad to win the tournament title. AASU defeated UNF, however, in South Regional action to advance to its sixth straight NCAA tournament, where the Pirates would lose to eventual national champion BYU-Hawaii in the quarterfinals.

Freshman Stephanie Kovacic, the PBAC’s Player of the Year, was named the ITA National Rookie of the Year and earned ITA All-America honors. Sophomore Michaela Kratochvilova also earned All-PBAC and ITA All-America honors, while seniors Petra Schemm and Marie-Claude Ostiguy were All-PBAC honorees. Head coach Simon Earnshaw, in his first year at the helm of the Pirate tennis program, was named the PBAC women’s Coach of the Year.

AASU is the only school to have both its men’s and women’s teams qualify for the NCAA Championships each of the past six seasons.

**Final ITA National / Regional Rankings**

**National – Singles**
Stephanie Kovacic - No. 3
Michaela Kratochvilova - No. 9
Petra Schemm - No. 37

**Regional – Singles**
Stephanie Kovacic - No. 2
Michaela Kratochvilova - No. 1

**National – Doubles**
Stephanie Kovacic - No. 2
Michaela Kratochvilova - No. 2

**Regional – Doubles**
Stephanie Kovacic - No. 1
Michaela Kratochvilova - No. 1

**ITA/NCAA DII All-America Honors**
Stephanie Kovacic (Singles & Doubles)
Michaela Kratochvilova (Singles & Doubles)

**ITA/ DII National Rookie of the Year**
Stephanie Kovacic

**ITA/ DII South Region Rookie of the Year**
Stephanie Kovacic

**ITA National Scholar-Athlete**
Marie-Claude Ostiguy

**GTE Academic All-District III Honors**
Marie-Claude Ostiguy (First Team)
**Track and Field**

Freshman Rebekah Mackie became AASU’s second track All-America with a fourth-place finish in the 5,000 meters at the NCAA Division II Outdoor Track and Field Championships in Raleigh, N.C.

The Auckland, New Zealand, native finished fourth with a time of 17:16.09, earning five points for the Pirates in the team standings and earning All-America honors. Mackie’s finish gave the Pirates a 41st place finish at the championships.

Mackie joined junior teammate Nikki Garland, AASU’s first track All-America, at the championships. Garland, who earned All-America honors as a freshman in the 800 meters, competed in both the 800 and the 1,500 meters at the championships this year, finishing 12th in the 1,500 meters with a time of 4:42.75 and 13th in the 800 meters with a time of 2:13.98.

**AASU Track All-America Honors**

Rebekah Mackie, 5000 Meters

**Golf**

On March 22, 2000, AASU athletic director Dr. Eddie Aenchbacher announced plans for the revival of the Pirates’ men’s golf program for the 2000-2001 season.

The men’s golf program was dropped as a varsity sport when AASU left its status as an NCAA Division I program in the 1987-88 athletic year. The revitalization of the golf program brings back a sport that earned several regional and national accolades, including berths in the NAIA Championships in the early 1970s, and boasts many former Pirate standouts, including 1996 AASU Athletic Hall of Fame inductee Toby Browne.

In a press conference at Southbridge Golf Club on May 24, 2000, Dr. Aenchbacher introduced Michael Butler as AASU’s new head golf coach.

Butler, a Savannah native and former NCAA Division II All-America golfer, graduated from Benedictine Military School in 1989 and went on to enjoy a successful collegiate golf career, earning NJCAA All-America honors at Florida Community College at Jacksonville and competing for the U.S. in the 1990 World University Games in Montpelier, France. Continuing his career at Jacksonville State University, Butler was a two-time NCAA Division II All-America honoree for the Gamecocks.

“I feel very excited to be starting the men’s golf program from the ground level,” Butler said. “I look forward to the challenge of creating a strong team at Armstrong Atlantic State.”

**Academics**

**PBAC Presidential Honor Roll Honorees**

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<th>Baseball</th>
<th>Basketball</th>
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AASU student-athletes continued to excel in the classroom in the 1999-2000 academic year. 54% of all AASU student-athletes carried GPAs of 3.0 or better and the overall GPA of AASU student-athletes, as a group, was 2.91. 50 AASU student-athletes earned PBAC Presidential Honor Roll honors and four student-athletes were named GTE Academic All-District - softball pitcher Julie King, women’s tennis player Marie-Claude Ostigu and men’s tennis players Christopher Petersen and Blaise Tribolet.

AASU student-athletes earned 31 Dean’s List honors in 1999-2000 and two AASU student-athletes - Ostigu and volleyball player Lindsay Ehlers - carried perfect 4.0 GPAs for the entire year.

Ostigu and Tribolet were honored with the AASU President’s Cup, given by the Savannah Exchange Club to the top AASU male and female student-athlete of the year academically.